HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS: MONDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 13, 1893. -SIX PAGES.

NO. 196.

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Jan. 21, 1894

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THE TRUTH ABOUT SALAMANDERS As to the Origin of the Bellef That They

Are at Home in Fire. 'Nobody knows how the superstition regarding the supposed fireproof quality of the salamander had its rise," said Dr. Steineger, the reptilian expert of the Smithsonian Institution to a reporter. "However, I can give what I think is a pretty good guess at it. To explain,

I shall have to tell you a story. "Once upon a time I was campfing out with a party, hunting and fishing. We had lighted a big fire. using for fuel several old logs. Stockholm, Sweden.
The Chartered Bank of India, Australia and While we were sitting around watching the progress of some cookery in which we were engaged a young lady at my side gave a little scream and pointed into the flames. I looked, and there was a small lizard crawling right out from among the glowing embers. It walked away, unburt apparently, through the grass and made its es-

"Now, that salamander had oc cupied a hole in one of the logs used for fuel. Several species of its kind live in old tree trunks. Doubtless this one found that it was getting uncomfortably hot and crawled out. Being moist and slimy, its body was protected from injury by the fire long enough to enable it to escape through the embers. But the sight of the animal deliberately making its appearance from the midst of the fire was certainly very surprising. Any ignorant person might easily have been led to imagine that the creature must be fireproof. It seems to me quite probable that the superstition

took its rise from just such occur-"There is so many species of alamanders that a description of them all would fill a book. They are to be found all over the world, except in very cold regions. In a popular sense, the name sala-mander is applied to all batrachians with tails. That is rather a loose definition. A tadpole is a batrachian with a tail, but it is not a salamander. The great majority of salamanders are small, such as the newts, found in springs. The biggest species in this country is the so-called 'mud eel,' or 'siren.' It Net Surplus 2,255,389 00 head, and it has external gills when fully developed, which is an exception to the rule among sala-

manders.

"The biggest salamander in the world is found in Japan. It attains a length of two feet, and is related to the "hellblender." Most salamanders live on insects, but the very large kinds eat pretty nearly everything as a rule. For instance, Life Insurance Co. the Japanese species is omnivorous. So far as I am aware none of the salamanders is considered good to eat, by civilized men at all events. Two years ago I obtained a specimen of the only known species of blind salamander. It came from a cave in Missouri. A so-called blind salamander exists in certain caves of Austria, but it is not a true salamander, though it would come under the popular definition, being

> a batrachian with a tail. "One peculiar thing about salamanders is that they are not as large when full grown as when they are partly developed. That seems a funny paradox, does it not? You see, salamanders go through a metamorphosis during their lifetime, as frogs do, though the change is not so marked. They have a larval period, as the tadpole is the larva of the frog. On becoming adult they shrink up considerably. During the larval period they have gills like a fish, which usually become rudimentary. An odd ex-ception to this rule is the 'axolotl' of Mexico, which does not undergo any such metamorphosis and never becomes adult in a scientific sense. In other words, it never reaches what is the final stage with other salamanders, but always remains a

"Axolots of different species are found in various parts of the United States, but they do undergo the change and become adult. How ever, if you keep one of them in water and prevent it from escaping. it will remain a larva always and will undergo no metamorphosis. In order to change it has to get on dry Having become a land animal, its external gills disappear, being no longer required for breathing in water. The Mexican axolotl never goes on land-at any rate, not for a longer time then its gills will remain wet.'

A facetious fellow, who has occasion to

Very Funny.

send postcards to a a certain small town where there is a postmistress, writes this legend on the top of the card: "Please forward after perusal."—Tit Bits. A Seasonable Explanation

Mayor (introducing his family to new pre-fect)—Here are my wife and my daughter. I would beg your excellency to observe that the elder of the two is my wife.—Svegliar-